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No. 32.

UNITED STATES.

[Reports to the Supervising Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

The smallpox outbreak at Key West, Fla.

KEY WEST, FLA., July 31, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to report that there has been no notable change in the state of affairs at the smallpox camp under my charge, since my letter of 28th instant, save the one fact, which I am glad to report, that the rebellious parties seem inclined to submit to discipline, on the point at issue, in disinfection of persons. * * *

Disinfection of premises is proceeding rapidly and very satisfactorily. This work is being done, to the smallest minutæ, under the eye of both Dr. Porter and myself, and both of us are sure that no possible outbreak can follow. All, or nearly all, textiles are being sent to camp for disinfection on account of our desire to remove all trace of disease from the city at the very earliest possible date, this being the surest means of preventing further spread.

Again, we wish to disinfect all houses, if possible, before their former occupants, upon release from camp, may be tempted to surreptitiously enter them, and therefore we remove soiled clothing and bedding to the camp.

We have inspected, and will continue to inspect and pass upon, every suspicious case reported.

I wish to note one point upon which I shall dwell at some length in my final report, viz, we have several cases in which the incubation period has distinctly exceeded three weeks.

It is noteworthy that all cases have very markedly improved since the occupancy of the camp, and the full and free admission of fresh air.

This affair has been attended by many difficulties, but the greatest of these is lack of fresh water, which has to be hauled, at heavy cost, in barrels to camp, and which has forced me to use salt water for baths and for laundry.

Upon final closure of the outbreak, it is my intention to rent a flat-boat, if such be obtainable, fill it with fresh water, float it around the island to the camp, barrel the water, and then use the boat on the beach as a disinfection tank, reserving the fresh water for subsequent use in laundering better class of textiles.

Regarding the use of the naphtha launches here and the cooperation of the United States Revenue Cutter Service in enforcing quarantine, it may be said that the people have so generally submitted to the law within the past ten days that I am of the opinion that it will be unnecessary to render this aid, at least for the present. At the time I wired there was much rebelliousness and many attempts to escape without vaccination, but this seems past.

Very respectfully,

J. H. WHITE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

KEY WEST, FLA., July 30, 1896.

No new cases; discharged 3 old cases and 2 suspects. Matters taking good shape. Porter and I disinfected three houses to-day.

WHITE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

KEY WEST, FLA., July 31, 1896.

No new cases. Three houses disinfected. * * *

WHITE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

KEY WEST, FLA., August 1, 1896.

No new cases; none discharged. Will send out about 20 during next week.

WHITE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

KEY WEST, FLA., August 3, 1896.

Three new cases in febrile stage; 1 death since Saturday. All in camp. Three houses disinfected to-day.

WHITE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

KEY WEST, FLA., August 4, 1896.

No new cases. We disinfected four houses to-day.

WHITE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

KEY WEST, FLA., August 6, 1896.

No new cases. No deaths to-day.

WHITE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

Quarantine of Chinese steerage passengers at San Francisco, Cal.

ANGEL ISLAND, CAL., July 22, 1896.

SIR: I have the honor to report that we have 44 Japanese and 228 Chinese steerage passengers from the steamship *China*, in quarantine on account of a case of varioloid in one of the Chinese. On the bill of health 9 deaths from plague at Hongkong and 2 cases of cholera at Yokohama were recorded. A case of smallpox broke out in one of the steerage passengers between Kobe and Yokohama, and the man was taken in quarantine at the latter port. One hundred and seventy-three of the quarantined passengers have been revaccinated, and all their baggage and clothing disinfected. They will be detained fourteen days, awaiting developments.

Very respectfully,

M. J. ROSENAU,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.